

Workplan for allocating community broadcast licences

The ABA has made 56 new community broadcasting radio licences available as a result of its planning process. Of these, 17 are deferred for allocation after a specified date (see Table 3). Of the remaining 39

licences, the ABA has allocated eight and is currently considering an other seven (see Table 1). The ABA is yet to call for applications for a further 24 (see Table 2). Group 1 licence areas were identified by the ABA as the

highest priority areas in the ABA's Australia-wide planning of spectrum. The ABA completed group 1 licence area plans (LAPs) in February 1997, and determined the first of the Group 2 LAPs in May 1997.

The ABA has considered the preparedness of known aspirant groups in the remaining group 1 licence areas, and proposes to commence allocation exercises in some of the group 2 areas ahead of a number of the remaining group 1 licence areas. The ABA plans to commence allocations of single licences for Bathurst and Kandos and two licences for Orange by the end of September.

"The ABA will progressively schedule available licences for allocation in light of factors such as the original licence area planning priorities, whether an area is already served by a community radio service, the range of existing radio services in the area and whether known aspirant broadcasting groups are well placed to pursue licence allocation at that time. The ABA maintains a flexible approach to the scheduling of licence allocation exercises, aiming to minimise the time taken for each exercise and to maximise the number of allocation exercises it can conduct at the same time.

Table 1: Licences which have been advertised

State	Area	No. of licences	Closing date for applications
Vic	Mildura*	1	allocated 11 September 1996
Qld	Mt Isa	2	closed
	Torres Strait	1	allocated 28 August 1997
SA	Ceduna	1	allocated 20 February 1997
	Kangaroo Island	1	allocated 23 June 1997
WA	Albany	1	closed
	Broome	1	allocated 8 August 1997
	Derby	1	closed
	Fitzroy Crossing	1	allocated 15 May 1997
	Halls Creek	1	allocated 26 August 1997
	Meekatharra	1	closed
	York	1	allocated 14 May 1997
NT	Darwin	2	ABA assessing further submissions from the three applicants
<i>Total</i>		<i>15</i>	

* Note that there is a second licence available in Mildura (see Table 2) which will be re-advertised. An earlier allocation exercise lapsed with the withdrawal of the only applicant.

Table 2: Licences for which applications are yet to be called

State	Area	No. of licences
NSW	Bathurst	1
	Barham	1
	Cobar	1
	Dubbo	1
	Kandos	1
	Lord Howe Is	1
	Orange	2
Vic	Ballarat	1
	Bendigo	2
	Echuca	1
	Kyneton	1
	Mildura	1
Qld	Cunnamulla	1
WA	Esperance	1
	Geraldton	2
	Kalgoorlie	1
	Merredin (Bruce Rock)	1
	Northampton	1
NT	Katherine	1
Territories	Christmas Island	1
	Cocos Island	1
<i>Total</i>		<i>24</i>

Table 3: Licences planned but not yet available for allocation

State	Area	No. of licences	Licence available
NSW	Bourke	1	8 January 1998
	Lightning Ridge	1	8 January 1998
	Lithgow	1	18 June 1999
	Mudgee	1	16 July 1999
Vic	Swan Hill	1	9 July 1998
SA	Riverland	1	22 August 1998
WA	Bunbury	1	27 November 1998
	Bridgetown	1	27 November 1998
	Collie	1	27 November 1998
	Kalgoorlie	1	16 October 1997
	Katanning	1	23 October 1998
	Mandurah	1	7 August 1998
	Margaret River	1	27 November 1998
	Narrogin	1	23 October 1998
	Northam	1	11 September 1998
	Wagin	1	23 October 1998
NT	Boorooloola	1	14 October 1997
<i>Total</i>		<i>17</i>	

Allocation has been deferred in these areas in order to allow time for community broadcasting groups to organise and build necessary support and skills before an allocation exercise commences. Note that the dates given are not a timetable for when the licences will be allocated but rather the dates after which the ABA will consider offering the licences.

The ABA welcomes comments on the order and timing of the allocation of available licences. Write to: Australian Broadcasting Authority, The Manager Allocations and Renewals Section PO Box Q500 Queen Victoria Building NSW 1230